

# Exploratory Process (Gap)

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## Sample Questions:

**Overview Questions** - Typically used after Positive Contact to gain a broad overview/background of the customer and their organization. (Should NOT be questions that could easily have been determined through pre-call research and preparation.)

I was reading through your organization's history. Can you tell me a bit about \_\_\_\_\_ ?

How are the recent trends in the industry affecting your company/organization?

Tell me a little bit about your background. How did you first get involved in (whatever industry they are a part of)?

**Focusing Questions** – Used to establish aspirations; hopes for improvement; betterment; needs. When customer discusses “important” concerns, we need to determine the outcome to which they relate i.e. profit, productivity, operating expenses, etc. “WHY is that important?” Often require follow-up Acknowledgement and Explore questions. (“Really? That’s interesting. Tell me more about that.”)

What are some of your key goals or plans for the coming year?

What is most important to you in a resource such as us?

What do you like about your current approach?

How is success (yours or your organization's) measured here?

**Realization Questions** – Used to gain an understanding of the customer's current reality; where they are with respect to their goals; aspirations; their situation at this time. Often require follow-up Acknowledgement and Explore questions. (“That’s an interesting perspective. How did that come about?”)

Where are you in terms of goals/plans/objectives?

What kind of barriers - issues are you running into?

You’ve undertaken a number of efforts; how are they going?

What’s the status today?

**Insight Questions** – Used when we encounter a self-described, satisfied customer - whether it seems as if they should be or not. Or to add Insight – acquired knowledge/wisdom when customers are unaware of other, more favorable approaches or options.

That sounds good. Are there any areas in which you sense you could improve above and beyond where you already are?

A lot has been changing with \_\_\_\_\_. Are you aware of some of the newer, different approaches?

A number of our other clients have been considering \_\_\_\_\_. Have you ever considered that?

Use Acknowledge and Explore questions to add understanding. If we receive a positive response to the Dimensional – Insight question, then be prepared to further establish a higher order Gap.

**Transition Question** – Used to transition from the Exploratory Process to the Presentation Process.

Thank you for providing me with such a thorough overview of your goals. May I - “present to you now” or “schedule a time” - to share a solution with you?

**Position Check - Assure you understand:**

Customer’s Gap(s)

Decision making approach

Criteria they will use to evaluate a solution

The sequence of the questions is not nearly as significant as developing the information. Typically, the Overview Question(s) will be the first ones used and the Transition Question will be the last one. In between those two we need to determine the customer’s “Actual” situation compared to their “Ideal” circumstances. And whether there may be Insight or a new Dimension we might add.